

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 IO-13  
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SP-02 SS-15 /086 W  
-----021357 241749Z /41

O P 241715Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7328  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 0523

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, CY, EG  
SUBJECT: CYPRUS/EGYPT

REF: NICOSIA 505

SUMMARY: GOC IS ASSIDUOUSLY AVOIDING OVERRACTING TO EGYPTIAN DECISION TO BREAK RELATIONS IN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE AND IS CONSIDERING MEANS OF PROPITIATING GOE IN HOPES OF EVENTUALLY MENDING THE BREACH. END SUMMARY.

1. GOC IN ALL ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IS MAKING CLEAR THAT IT REGRETS EGYPT'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW ITS DIPLOMATIC MISSION AND TO REQUEST CYPRUS TO DO THE SAME. CYPRIOT FOREIGN MINISTER CHRISTOPHIDES SAID FEB 23 THAT GOC WAS NOT RETALIATING IN RECALLING ITS AMBASSADOR FROM CAIRO (HE IS SCHEDULED TO COME BACK FEB 26) BUT WAS ACCEDING TO EGYPTIAN REQUEST. MOREOVER, HE SAID GOC HAD NOT ORDERED OR SET A DATE FOR DEPARTURE

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OF EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR (WHO IS LEAVING FEB 26). AT SAME TIME, GOC IS EMPHASIZING POSITIVE ASPECT OF AGREEMENT TO RETAIN INTEREST SECTIONS, PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU DESCRIBING THIS AS ARRANGEMENT TO PERMIT EMBASSIES TO "CONTINUE TO FUNCTION AT A LOW LEVEL." (WE UNDERSTAND THAT ONE LOW-RANKING DIPLOMAT AND AN ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF THREE WILL REMAIN IN RESPECTIVE

INTEREST SECTIONS; CYPRIOTS WILL WORK UNDER BRITISH FLAG IN CAIRO, BUT WHICH COUNTRY WILL PROTECT EGYPTIAN INTERESTS IN NICOSIA IS NOT YET KNOWN.)

2. OUT OF EVIDENT WORRY OVER OTHER POSSIBLE ADVERSE MEASURES GOE MIGHT TAKE, SUCH AS SHUTTING DOWN OF NICOSIA/CAIRO AIR LINK (TWO WEEKLY FLIGHTS BY EACH COUNTRY'S FLAG AIRLINE) AND THOSE STEPS MENTIONED REFTEL, GOC IS TAKING CONCILIATORY STANCE IN ITS RESPONSES TO EGYPTIAN ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU, IN BRIEF BUT WELL-CONSIDERED STATEMENT FEB 23, SPOKE TO WHAT APPEARS TO BE MINIMUM EGYPTIAN DEMAND -- THAT TWO TERRORISTS BE EXTRADITED TO EGYPT. KYPRIANOU APPEALED TO SADAT TO REALIZE THAT CYPRUS MUST APPLY LOCAL JURISDICTION IN THIS CASE, BUT NOTED THAT "AFTER THE COURT'S VERDICT WE SHALL DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF THE FATE OF THE TWO MURDERERS." AN INDICATION THAT HE MIGHT BE WILLING TO HAND OVER THE TWO TERRORISTS TO EGYPT AFTER TRIAL. (WE KNOW FROM OTHER GOC SOURCES THAT GOVERNMENT LEGAL OFFICIALS SEARCHED, UNSUCCESSFULLY, FOR SOME LEGAL MEANS OF EXTRADITING TERRORISTS.) ELSEWHERE IN STATEMENT, KYPRIANOU SAID HE WAS OVER-LOOKING ABUSIVE LANGUAGE SADAT HAD USED IN REFERRING TO CYPRUS AND ITS PRESIDENT. HE SAID SADAT'S PRESENT PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE WAS JUSTIFIABLE. HE APPEALED TO EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT TO RERPOND TO CYPRUS' CONSTRUCTIVE

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INTENTITNS, AND HOPED PASSAGE OF TIME WOULD LEAD TO FULL RESTORATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. IN ANOTHER CONCILIATORY GESTURE TOWARD EGYPTIANS, CYPRIOT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEB 23 OBSERVED ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF YUSEF EL SEBAI AS A GREAT FRIEND OF CYPRUS.

4. IN ADDITION TO PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND GESTURES, WE KNOW THAT GOC MINISTER FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHRISTOPHIDES HAS CONSIDERED OTHER MEANS OF PROPITIATING EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP. ONE THOUGHT WAS TO SEND A MINISTERIAL LEVEL MISSION TO EGYPT (ALTHOUGH THIS WAS DISCARDED.) ANOTHER WAS TO CONTRIVE TO LET EGYPTIANS INTERPRET THE TRANSFER OF GOC INTERIOR MINISTER VENIAMIN, WHOSE ASSIGNMENT TO LONDON AS HIGH COMMISSION TO LONDON IS RUMORED TO BE IN THE OFFING IN ANY CASE, AS APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT FOR "HIS MISHANDLING" OF THE LARNACA INCIDENT.

5. COMMENT. SHAKEN AND SHORT OF CONFIDENCE IN ITS OWN HANDLING OF THE LARNACA INCIDENT, AND FEARFUL OF FURTHER REPERCUSSIONS FROM IT, GOC APPEARS TO BE SUMMONING RESERVES OF PRUDENCE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE IN ATTEMPT TO RIDE OUT THE STORM.

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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